

Isabella County Compliance Review September, 2005

At the March 2003 meeting of the Michigan Emergency Telephone Service Committee (ETSC) the ETSC voted to conduct random compliance reviews of 9-1-1 expenditures of Michigan Counties. These reviews would be for expenditures of funds generated through the provisions of the amended 9-1-1 Act, PA 32 of 1986 (PA 32). County 9-1-1 revenues include: wireless revenues distributed to counties through the State; revenues collected through county 9-1-1 surcharges on land line phones; and dispatcher training funds distributed to primary public safety answering points (PSAPs).

On March 15, 2005 the ETSC Certification Subcommittee randomly selected Isabella County for a compliance review. Subcommittee members Hensel, Bawol, Norman and Miller-Brown were named to the Isabella County Compliance Review Team by the chair. The years 2003, 2004, and 2005 (to date) were decided as the time period for the focus of the review.

On May 12, 2005 a letter advising Isabella County of its review was sent to the 9-1-1 Director, Ms. Christine Schultz at the Isabella County Central Dispatch. (Mailing of the letter was delayed due a medical absence of one of the involved parties). The letter requested the following information from Isabella County:

- The Isabella County 9-1-1 plan
- A copy of the 2004 and 2003 9-1-1 budgets
- Copies of agreements between the county and PSAPs (if more than one PSAP in the County)
- List of appropriate PSAP managers and their phone numbers
- Copies of budgetary reports or journals including the line items for 9-1-1 funds receipts.
- Copy of indirect costs, if they are being charged to 9-1-1
- Copy of wireless training funds, revenue journal entries and expenditures
- Name of a point of contact person

The requested information was received by the State 9-1-1 Administrator's Office in a timely and very organized manner.

Background

Isabella County 9-1-1 Central Dispatch (ICCD) receives the entire 9-1-1 call volume and dispatches for all emergency service providers within the geographical boundaries of Isabella County. ICCD is a county department within Isabella County. ICCD's operating policy and procedures are established through the ICCD 9-1-1 Governing Board. There are written policies for operations, including a policy on dispatching the closest car to calls for service.

Isabella County implemented Enhanced 9-1-1 in 1992. The county became Phase I wireless 9-1-1 compliant in 2000. Phase II wireless 9-1-1 was deployed in 2004 and 2005. ICCD dispatches for six police departments, (including the sheriff department, the Saginaw-Chippewa Tribal Police, Mt. Pleasant Police Department, Sheperd Police Department, Sherman Twp. Marshall, and the Michigan State Police - Mt. Pleasant post, one county-wide emergency medical service (EMS), and twelve fire departments. In 2004, ICCD received an estimated 17,500 landline 9-1-1 calls and an estimated 7,875 wireless 9-1-1 calls. ICCD logged 53,790 dispatched incidents in 2004. ICCD employs eleven full-time dispatchers, two supervisors and a full-time director.

The dispatch center is a separate facility attached to a public services center (which also houses the county Health and Emergency Management Departments and the Michigan State Police Mt. Pleasant Post). It was built with county funds and the space occupied by ICCD is leased from the county. Its annual lease payment is \$31,000 and in keeping with a reasonable rate for the facility. The dispatch center has its own secure entrance. Consisting of about 3,300 square feet, it houses the communications room, 9-1-1 supervisor's office, director's office, conference room, locker/restroom, equipment room, and break room. The 9-1-1 phone system is capable of taking Phase I and II wireless 9-1-1 calls. The phone system also interfaces with computerized dispatching (CAD) and mapping systems.

A combination of landline and wireless 9-1-1 money provide the revenue for ICCD's budgeted operational costs. The landline 9-1-1 surcharge is collected on the basis of a vote to Isabella County citizens. The current 9-1-1 landline collection is \$2.25 monthly. The first 9-1-1 landline surcharge election was passed in 1994. The surcharge has since been passed in 1999 and again in 2004. Since the wireless 9-1-1 distributions began in 2000, Isabella County has been certified by the ETSC as eligible to receive its portion of state wireless 9-1-1 funds.

Central Michigan University operates its own PBX telephone system and 9-1-1 calls generated on the campus of CMU are answered by the CMU Police Department. The calls are basic 9-1-1 and the CMU Police Department maintains an internal database for location information. The CMU Police Department dispatches the on campus police and EMS calls. Fire calls are relayed to ICCD. All wireless 9-1-1 calls from campus are answered and direct dispatched by ICCD, which has radio communications capabilities with CMU Police Dept.

Review Process

On August 4th, 2005, Bawol, Norman, and Miller-Brown discussed the Isabella County documents. Based on the information provided, there was a clear and concise accounting of the all Isabella County 9-1-1 funds. A meeting was scheduled with Ms. Christine Schultz and the Isabella County Compliance Review team.

Meeting with Director Christine Schultz in Mt. Pleasant September 23rd, 2005.

Ms. Schultz reviewed the accounting documentation from 2003 through 2005 with the compliance review team members. She also provided the team with a summary report of each year. The summary report confirmed that each 9-1-1 fund; wireless revenue, land line revenue, and dispatcher training revenue, was logged and tracked through its own cost center.

The accounting reports also showed the interest payments for the principal balances on each fund. Additionally, the summary reports and accounting reports confirmed that fund balances remaining at the previous budget year were carried over in the respective fund account into the next budget year.

September 23rd visit to ICCD dispatch center.

Dispatchers Tisha Dodd and Alauna Muir were on duty on the morning the compliance review team was at the center. The center has three full consoles. The consoles have radio functions, CAD, 9-1-1 call screens, and mapping for wireless 9-1-1 calls. There is an emergency generator and all critical equipment is connected to the generator and a system UPS. There is an extended-time recorder that logged radio and telephone phone transmissions. Each dispatcher also has access to short-term audio play-back at their consoles.

Dispatch staff has close access to the restroom and a break area. There are usually two dispatchers on duty. Policies and other manuals are kept in the center. Additionally, ICCD utilizes an electronic-based response protocol system. The system provides policy, procedures, and response instructions directly to dispatchers through the CAD monitors. Dispatchers do not enter warrants and personal protection orders (PPO's) into LEIN, nor are they performing any non-

dispatch related duties (e.g. report processing or jail functions). The dispatchers are trained for emergency medical dispatch through the National Academy of Emergency Medical Dispatch (NAEMD). An automatic mutual aid dispatching system is currently being developed for rescue and structure fires.

Isabella County Summary

Annual Operating Budget for 2003 = \$ 878,393
Annual Operating Budget for 2004 = \$ 839,629
Annual Operating Budget for 2005 = \$ 841,750

Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2003 = \$ 116,154
Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2004 = \$ 123,382
Wireless 9-1-1 Payments 2005 = \$ 133,809

9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2003 = \$ 616,140
9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2004 = \$ 717,153
9-1-1 Land Line Surcharge 2005 = \$ 680,360

Wireless 9-1-1 Funds

Wireless funds are remitted into a separate account (County Fund # 297-543-003). The funds are used for dispatcher payroll. Unexpended funds are carried over in the fund from each budget year into the next.

Land Line 9-1-1 Surcharge Funds

The land line surcharge funds are remitted into a separate account (County Fund # 297-602-000). The funds are used to pay for the day-to-day operations of the 9-1-1 center. These costs include: utilities, radio system maintenance, dispatching staff wages and benefits, dispatch computers, dispatch center LEIN, office supplies, memberships and subscriptions directly related to 9-1-1, generator expenses, and telephone costs. Costs of accounting and payroll/benefits administration are absorbed by the county general fund through its routine operations.

Training Funds

All wireless training funds are receipted and maintained in a separate account (# 297-602-002).

The 2001 and 2002 training distributions have been used in full in accordance with the two-year time limit established by the ETSC, making ICCD eligible for 2005 application. At the time of this final report, continued expenditures of the 2003 training disbursements were made in accordance with the ETSC guidelines and ICCD qualifies for 2006 disbursement eligibility. (Accounting calculations for all training funds are done on a calendar year basis).

Training Fund Distribution 2001 = \$ 2,785
Training Fund Distribution 2002 = \$ 5,103
Training Fund Distribution 2003 = \$ 8,308
Training Fund Distribution 2004 = \$ 4,621
Training Fund Distribution 2005 = \$ 7,455

Training Fund Expenditures 2001 = \$ 1,089
Training Fund Expenditures 2002 = \$ 3,373
Training Fund Expenditures 2003 = \$ 3,661
Training Fund Expenditures 2004 = \$ 6,558
Training Fund Expenditures 2005 = \$ 3,218

Findings and Final Summary

The Isabella County 9-1-1 Plan was enacted in September of 1992. The Plan is current and in compliance with P.A. 32. The 9-1-1 plan creates both a 9-1-1 Governing Board and a 9-1-1 Technical Control Committee. The 9-1-1 Governing Board advises on the day-to-day operations of ICCD. The Technical Control Committee oversees dispatching policy and procedure. The Technical Committee consists of the sheriff, a representative of the Michigan State Police, firefighters from two fire departments, an emergency medical services (EMS) representative, a representative of the Saginaw-Chippewa Tribal Police Department, a representative of Mt. Pleasant Public Safety, a representative of Central Michigan University Public Safety, and a representative of the Shepard Police Department. The 9-1-1 Technical Control Committee meets on a quarterly basis.

Necessary Corrective Action:

No necessary correction action is required at this time.

Recommended Action:

- 1) The PSAP facility has moved from its original location, an Administrative Finding to the 9-1-1 Plan should be done to indicate that change until such time as the move can be indicated during a future opening of the 9-1-1 Plan.
- 2) The current Central Dispatch director has little, if any, back-up assistance. While there are supervisors that work in the dispatch center as supervisor/dispatchers, the director is very limited in the administrative tasks that can be assigned to supervisors. The director also serves as the primary source of on-call oversight when there is no supervisor on duty. An evaluation of the management staffing levels should be conducted as it is apparent that additional management assistance for the director may be warranted.

Isabella County 9-1-1 currently has a fund balance of \$350,070. An increase in the landline surcharge is expected in the future to offset the increasing costs of operating expenses of ICCD with decreasing land line surcharge revenue.

The accounting system in place at Isabella County properly keeps the 9-1-1 funds separate from other county funds, both at the revenue and expenditure side. Interest is collected on the principal and transferred to the respective 9-1-1 accounts in a timely manner. In accordance with PA 32, all Isabella County 9-1-1 funds are used only for allowable 9-1-1 expenses.

In closing, based upon the documentation requested, made available to, and reviewed by the subcommittee, Isabella County and its 9-1-1 operation are in full compliance with the requirements of PA 32, as amended.

Submitted By:

Suzan Hensel

John Bawol

Leonard Norman

Harriet Miller-Brown

February 2006